

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 5-7 and 9-20 are pending. By the present amendment, claim 7 has been amended to correct a minor informality, claim 17 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as to the subject matter contained therein, and claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form. Favorable reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 1, 5-7 and 9-20 are allowable and that claim 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Without acquiescing in any rejections, claim 17 has been canceled and claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form. Claim 7 has also been amended to correct a minor informality. Accordingly the prior art rejections are moot, and all pending claims are allowable over the prior art. Accordingly, no further comment will be made with respect thereto.

The rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Mizutani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,898,511) is moot. Without acquiescing in the rejection, claim 17 has been canceled. Therefore, the rejection is moot, and reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.


In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

SUZUKI et al
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Should the Examiner deem that further issues require resolution prior to allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney of record at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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